

PUBLIC WELFARE PROGRESS

Published Monthly for Free Distribution by the North Carolina State Board of Charities
and Public Welfare

Vol. 5

RALEIGH, N. C., JANUARY, 1924

No. 1

IN 1923 STATE WELFARE BOARD SPENT UNUSUALLY LIVELY YEAR

**Most Successful and Most Eventful
Year in Board's History Was
The One Just Ended**

**PART IN PRISON DISCUSSION
MOST SENSATIONAL ACTIVITY**

**Mothers' Aid, Clinics for Crippled Children
and Standards for County Officers
Also Outstanding**

In 1923 the State Board of Charities and Public Welfare went through the liveliest and the most successful year of its history. It seems safe to say that many people in North Carolina who never knew before that there was a State Board of Charities and Public Welfare not only knew during 1923 that one existed, but knew also its stand on prison reform at least, perhaps even something of its other activities. Of course, the Board's position in the prison controversy of last April-May was what the reporters call the "most outstanding feature" of its year.

The Board's stand in the prison controversy which raged in North Carolina for five weeks last spring is too well known to need recapitulation. Throughout this heated controversy the Board maintained that thorough investigation of the State Prison system should be made, and was prepared to make it in accordance with its lawfully constituted powers. The abolition of corporal punishment and the dark cells and the adoption of the indeterminate sentence for State prisoners with investigation of the county prison systems by the solicitors at the instigation of Governor Morrison was the result of the controversy.

Gets Mothers' Aid Law

But there were other high lights beside the prison controversy for the Board of Charities and Public Welfare during the year just ended. The passage of the Mothers' Aid Law by the General Assembly of 1923, and the 50 per cent increase in the Legislature's appropriation to the Board were two of them. Supervision of the administration of the Mothers' Aid Fund of \$50,000 from the State

(Continued on page 6)

A BUILDING BOOM FOR COUNTY INSTITUTIONS

**Six Counties Built County Homes and
Ten Erected New Jails in 1923;
Others Plan to Do So**

There was a boom in the building of county homes and jails in North Carolina during 1923 according to Roy M. Brown, head of the bureau of institutional supervision of the State Board of Charities and Public Welfare. Six counties have built new county homes during the past year, and five others are planning to build in the near future. Ten counties have built new jails.

Counties in which new county homes have been erected are: Rowan, Nash, Person, Caldwell, Alamance, and Johnston. Those who are planning to build are: Jackson, Robeson, Rutherford, Durham and Harnett. Clay has purchased a farm and is using the dwelling-house on it. In 1922, county homes were built in Halifax, Chatham, Wayne, Vance, Guilford, Watauga, Burke, Polk, and Randolph.

In 1923, jails were built or begun in Polk, Rutherford, McDowell, Cleveland, New Hanover, Pender, Duplin, Wilson, Edgecombe, and Nash.

Although none of the counties have yet taken advantage of the law enacted by the General Assembly of 1923 permitting several counties to unite in the building of a district hospital-home, Avery has made arrangements with Watauga to keep its poor in the Watauga institution.

This plan of the district hospital-home is preferred to the county institution by the State Board of Charities and Public Welfare. In speaking in the same vein of the county jails, Mr. Brown says:

"I think we ought to go from a county system to a district system. Some of these small counties should not have to go to the expense of building jails for a very small number of inmates. Tyrrell did not have a single inmate in either its jail or its county home all last year. Dare went for six months without any. Polk County has just been

(Continued on page 2)

COMMISSIONER EXPLAINS JUVENILE COURT SYSTEM

**Women Voters and Club Women of
State Studying Subject; Board
Has Prepared Questionnaire**

EDITOR'S NOTE:—The N. C. League of Women Voters, with the coöperation of the Social Service Department of the N. C. Federation of Women's Clubs is at present studying the juvenile court system in North Carolina with a view to giving it their intelligent support. To aid them in this, the State Board of Charities and Public Welfare has prepared and distributed a questionnaire on this system which will be sent to any one who wishes to familiarize himself with the subject. A committee composed of Mrs. Mary O. Cowper, executive secretary of the N. C. League of Women Voters, chairman; Mrs. Charles Quinlan, chairman of the Social Service Department of the N. C. Federation of Women's Clubs, and Mrs. Kate Burr Johnson, Commissioner of Public Welfare, is directing this study.

BY KATE BURR JOHNSON

(In the *Monthly News* of the N. C. League of Women Voters.)

The Juvenile Court movement in this country began in 1899, when a bill passed the Illinois legislature creating a juvenile court system for that state. In July of the same year the Juvenile Court of Chicago was established, mainly as a result of the efforts of Chicago club women. Colorado followed soon with Judge Ben Lindsey presiding over the well-known court at Denver, and during the intervening years the movement has grown with great rapidity. It was twenty years, however, after the passage of the Illinois law before people in North Carolina began to see that something was radically wrong with our methods of dealing with dependent, neglected and delinquent children. In 1919 the North Carolina General Assembly passed a law providing for a state-wide system of juvenile courts. This law has been the subject of some criticism, much misunderstanding, and a limited amount of appreciation. But before we go into a discussion of our present juvenile court system let us see what it supplanted.

(Continued on page 5)